



Minnesota Department of Transportation

395 John Ireland Boulevard

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News Release

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Contact: Sue Roe
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MnDOT seeks public input on plan for improved freight, passenger movement on Minnesota railroads

Statewide meetings set on State Rail Plan

ST. PAUL, Minn. - The Minnesota Department of Transportation, along with local municipalities and counties, will hold several public meetings statewide in November and December to gather input for the 2015 update of the Minnesota State Rail Plan.

A draft of the plan will be available for the public's review by January 2015.

The Minnesota State Rail Plan covers the state's freight and passenger rail system. It provides guidance and priorities for state transportation decisions to ensure that efficient, competitive services are available to rail customers and to enhance freight access to local and global markets.

"Key to this plan update will be a review for compliance with 2013 Federal Rail Administration guidance," said Dave Christianson, senior rail planner. "The 2015 update will integrate the latest information on four currently active passenger rail projects, re-evaluate potential future passenger rail corridors and update freight commodity flows and trends. The update will also develop a freight and passenger rail project list for planning and investment purposes."

The Minnesota State Rail Plan aligns with other MnDOT planning documents, including Minnesota GO, the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan, and the Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan to provide a framework for effective use of the state's freight and passenger rail network and its future development.

Public outreach meetings will include an overview of the [current plan](#), along with anticipated passenger and freight rail expansions in the near- and long-term future.

Meetings scheduled to date are:

- St. Cloud, Nov. 5, 5 to 7 p.m., city hall
- Eau Claire, Wis., Nov. 6, 5 to 7 p.m., Chippewa Valley Technical College, Business Education Center, 620 Clairemont Ave.

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- Red Wing, Nov. 12, 5 to 7 p.m., city council chambers
- Mankato, Nov. 13, 5 to 7 p.m., Mankato Intergovernmental Center
- Duluth, Nov. 17, 5 to 7 p.m. Great Northern Union Depot, Great Hall

Other public meetings will be scheduled in Fargo/Moorhead, Rochester, and Willmar. The plan also will be reviewed at the Nov. 10 Passenger Rail Forum from noon to 2 p.m. and at the December Freight and Logistics Symposium in St. Paul.

Additionally, two rounds of public meetings will be held around the state in January to review plan drafts.

The public can make comments by emailing StateRailPlan.dot@state.mn.us or going to the public comment form at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/freight/railplan.html>.

To schedule an open house in your area, contact Dave.Christianson@state.mn.us.

Updated information about the Minnesota State Rail Plan will be posted at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/railplan/index.html>.

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